

HYMAN GESSER



HYMAN D. GESSER April 24, 1929- December 22, 2014 Professor Hyman "Hymie" Gesser, Ph.D. died peacefully in the early morning hours on December 22, 2014, at the Riverview Health Center. Hymie is survived by his devoted wife Esther, sons Isaac (Natasha) and Avi (Brook), daughter Sarah (Jeff) and grandchildren Amber, Courtney, Sadie, Lexi and Mae. The son of a house painter, Dr. Gesser received a Ph.D. in Chemistry from McGill University on full scholarship in 1952. He and Esther met in Montreal, in 1951, and they spent 62 glorious years married to each other, loving each other, and traveling the world as invited guests due to the great interest in Dr. Gesser's work. He served as a Professor of Chemistry at the University of Manitoba for over 40 years, where he gained the status of Professor Emeritus in 1997. During his long career, Dr. Gesser published hundreds of academic papers, wrote several text books, filed more than a dozen patents, appeared in local newspapers several times a year on scientific issues, and won various awards for his research. He presented on his research work at conferences around the globe, including Russia, Japan, Israel, and Australia. His inventions include a form of extended wear contact lenses, a paint that allows boats to go significantly faster, and an irrigation system that allows plants to drink water only when they need it. Dr. Gesser also volunteered his time to teach science to young children by performing science-magic shows at various community events. He was a notorious pack-rat, who kept virtually every piece of paper he read. At his office, the papers were piled so high on his desk that he could not be seen behind them. Because he worried that people would knock over his pile when looking for him, he installed a mirror that hung directly over his head at a 45 degree angle so he could see people coming and they could see when he was not in. Many of his students will remember having conversations with an inverted image of the top of his head. Hymie will be sorely missed by his family, friends, former students, and all who were fortunate enough to experience his brilliant mind, mischievous smile, terrible suits, and the infectious thrill of discovery that he constantly exhibited. A special thank you to the staff at Grace Hospital (3 South) and the Riverview Health Center (3 West), who made his last few weeks comfortable and dignified. Like his scientific discoveries, Dr. Gesser will live on in the many lives he touched with his humour, generosity and passion. A service has taken place on December 23. In lieu of flowers, donations in Hymie's memory can be made to Herzlia-Adas Yeshurun Synagogue, 620 Brock Street, Winnipeg, MB, Canada or a charity of your choice.